

GREENSBORO PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

Wednesday, August 12, 2009 – 4:00pm
Windsor Recreation Center – 1601 E. Lee Street

PRESENT MEMBERS: Rose Marie Ponton (Chair), Carl Brower, Jr (Vice-Chair), Paul Brown, Marc Bush, Ken Free, Lori Galbreath, Bill Knight, Steve Moore

ABSENT MEMBERS: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Roger Bardsley (Guilford County), Steve Branson, Matt Brown (Coliseum), Erica Chadwick, Martha Cook, John Hughes, Jean Jackson, Amanda Lehmert (News & Record), Dan Maxson, Mel Melton, Karen Neill (Cooperative Extension Services), Darius Oliver, Weesie Person, Marcie Richardson, Laurie Thore, Chris Wilson

The regular meeting of the Greensboro Parks and Recreation Commission was held at Windsor Recreation Center. Rose Marie Ponton, Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:00pm.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the July 8, 2009 Commission Meeting were approved as submitted.

Rose Marie Ponton, Chair, stated that Dan Maxson, Administrative Services Manager, will sit in place of the absent Dr. Anthony Wade, Interim Parks and Recreation Director.

Windsor Recreation Center Presentation

Erica Chadwick, Windsor Recreation Center Director, presented the Commission with events and programs currently held at the center.

Aquatic Center

Ponton stated that the Aquatic Center presentation would be heard at this time.

Matt Brown, Coliseum Director, stated that he attended the Eagle Scout Award presentation for Brandt Taylor last evening regarding his “all accessible” project at Pomona field.

Brown informed the Commission that in less than 100 days the engineering and design team completed the aquatic center design work. The Aquatic Center Advisory Board has viewed the design. This Board will meet again on Thursday, August 12, 2009 and will have the opportunity to meet the design team and pool consultant.

Brown presented a PowerPoint presentation to the Commission showing the aquatic center design. Brown stated that the designers looked at ways to make this facility cost effective. The design stays away from using glass windows due to the potential glare effect it would have on lifeguards and competitors during swim meets. The design leaves opportunity for an outdoor patio area. The facility will consist of a warm up pool, a therapeutic/learn to swim pool that will allow for warm up swimming, learning to swim, and lap swimming. This pool includes an ADA handicap ramp that leads into the pool, a chair lift, and a bench for sitting in the water. This pool is 3ft. deep on one end and 4ft. deep on the other. A glass wall separates this pool from the 50 meter competition pool. The competitive pool will allow for 50 meter long course swimming and two 25 meter swimming. A third pool will consist of a 17ft. diving well containing a one meter spring board and 3 meter spring board. Eighty-eight parking spaces have been designated for pool users. There will be seating for 1,880 spectators on the upper level which will be accessible from stairs or elevator, and seating for approximately 600 on the lower level. The facility will also include lockers and restrooms. Separate locker rooms will be available for competitive swimmers. There will also be a lifeguard and supervisor station, “wet” classrooms for training, a health and training area with an adjoining restroom, potential hospitality areas, and a ready room (a heated room for swimmers), and a multipurpose room. A pool equipment room will be equipped with an infrared system for pool filtration that reduces the amount of liquid chlorine used and reduces

chlorine smell and eye irritation. A Dektron scoreboard will be installed. All facility requirements have been met with USA Swimming and NCAA. The swimming community is joining efforts to try to raise \$250,000 to pay for the scoreboard. The seating capacity puts this facility 3rd nationally giving a national and regional appeal. The Special Events Center will allow the opportunity to allow a canopy walkway giving a direct connection to the aquatic facility. The Special Events Center could provide space for swimming and coach certification, general registration, a welcome reception, etc.

Brower inquired if there will be concessions.

Brown replied stating that there are two areas capable of housing concession carts that would provide healthy refreshments.

Brown stated that he believes the facility will be able to operate 15-17 hours per day. A 5:00am opening is anticipated. Brown stated that his goal is to create a curriculum based “learn to swim” program in partnership with Guilford County Schools. A concept is being designed for sponsorships for this program.

Brown stated that the flexibility of the 3 pools will allow to always offer lap swimming and accommodate general patron even perhaps during swim meets. Brown stated that he envisions 2 full-time employees, one for pool manager/programming and one for mechanical and part-time employees such as lifeguards. Current coliseum employees would consume the remainder of responsibilities. Internship opportunities would be available.

Brown informed the Commission that the City Engineer estimated the project to cost 16-17 million dollars; however Brown stated that he estimates the cost to be 14.4 million dollars. The cost of construction has decreased drastically which is why there is a sense of urgency to proceed. Currently there are 22 possible qualified general contractors and 3 possible qualified pool contractors.

Paul Brown, Commission Member, inquired if there would be a first aid station.

Matt Brown replied stating that there would be an area for first aid and medical staff with separate restroom accommodations.

Matt Brown stated that the design team has to be 60% complete with the design work this week and 80-90% complete by next week. The projected goal is to send the construction drawing to bid on September 24, 2009. This is scheduled to be presented to City Council on October 20, 2009.

NEW BUSINESS

Nominating Committee Report

Ken Free, Commission Member, reported that the nominating committee recommends Rose Marie Ponton continue serving as Commission Chair and Carl Brower, Jr. continue serving as Commission Vice-Chair.

Action Taken

A motion was made by Ken Free and second by Paul Brown to approve the nominating committee recommendations. A vote in favor was unanimous.

Warnersville Recreation Center 50th Anniversary

Mel Melton, Warnersville Recreation Center Director, invited everyone to attend the Warnersville Recreation Center 50th Anniversary Celebration on September 13, 2009. Current and previous volunteers and employees will be recognized. A memorial will be given to honor those volunteers and employees who have passed away.

Community Gardens

Karen Neill, Cooperative Extension Services, stated that the Cooperative Extension Services has partnered with Greensboro Parks and Recreation for numerous projects, such as Growing the Green Way program.

Community Gardens have progressed from having 3 gardens to 20 community gardens with 3-4 more planned for

this fall. A tour of community gardens was conducted 2 weeks ago. Thirty to fifty people arrived at various gardens. The Cooperative Extension Garden was among the tour which is the largest and oldest among the gardens.

Neill continued stating that community gardens have grown in popularity this year due to the economy and people being more health conscious. Community gardens draw communities together, but not all current gardens are in “communities”, some are located at churches and one is located at Keeley Park which are “open” community gardens. Open community gardens offer the opportunity for someone who may reside in an apartment or townhome to have space to garden.

Neill stated that she and Brooks Mullane, Program Support Superintendent, visited Charlotte/Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation Department to see how their community gardens are set up within the parks.

Neill presented the Commission with a PowerPoint presentation of the following various community gardens, although not all of them are located on Parks and Recreation property.

- Cooperative Extension Garden (largest and oldest)
- Steelman Park located in the Glenwood Neighborhood (provided by an Eat Smart, Move More NC grant with efforts from Cooperative Extension Services, Greensboro Parks and Recreation, and Guilford County Health Department). This garden has 20 beds.
- Keeley Park (prepared this spring with 30 beds, 10 of which are in use).
- Town of Gibsonville (will include fruit).
- Starmount Presbyterian (all items harvest is given back to community, such as Urban Ministries).
- Brandywine (individual community whose land is owned by the community with 14 beds).
- Beloved Community (3 beds with one large plowed area).
- Fairview Resource Center in High Point.
- Holy Trinity
- Sedgefield Lakes (community),
- Guilford and Prescott Streets (a large piece of land located off on the Greenway own by the Guilford County School System and efforts are being conducted to perhaps create a lease agreement for this approximately 2 acre area of land who would work with the Westerwood Neighborhood and other neighborhoods that would serve that area).

Friends of Greensboro Parks and Recreation Golf Tournament

Marcie Richardson, Friends of Greensboro Parks and Recreation Foundation Executive Director, stated that the Friends Foundation will hold its second annual golf tournament fundraiser at the Bryan Park Champion’s Course on September 18, 2009 with a shotgun start of 1:00pm. The early bird registration fee is \$75 through August 28, 2009. After this date the registration fee will be \$90. Registration forms can be submitted to Mike Moye, Golf Tournament Committee Chair, or Marcie Richardson. Richardson requested that the Commission inform Moye or herself of anyone who may be interested in becoming a sponsor.

Ponton stated that all proceeds go to the Friends of Greensboro Parks and Recreation Foundation to be used towards Administrative fees.

OLD BUSINESS

Aquatic Facility

This item was presented earlier in the meeting.

Playful City USA

In the absence of Brooks Mullane, Chris Wilson, Parks, Gardens, and Program Support Manager, reported that Greensboro has been chosen as one of 93 communities across the nation designated as a Playful City USA. The Mayor proclaimed a “play day” on June 27, 2009. Wilson then turned the presentation over to Paul Brown, Playful City USA Committee Member.

Paul Brown commended Mullane and the Playful City USA Committee for their efforts towards receiving this designation. Brown informed the Commission that their packets include the Playful City USA designation flyer.

Wilson added that the City of Greensboro received this designation because of the uniqueness Greensboro brings in terms of Parks and Recreation who has 174 facilities with opportunities that are culturally diverse, tobacco free zones, a department with 2 certified playground inspectors, etc. This designation launches a re-dedication initiative within our neighborhood and community parks. Some of the needs that staff has addressed through community collaborations are accessibility in the Elmwood area, Cascade Park, beautification projects, and more. Goals include additional playground equipment, playground programs, additional programming with special emphasis on neighborhood initiatives. Wilson then turned the meeting over to Laurie Thore, Parks and Recreation Marketing Director.

Thore stated that Greensboro is one of five cities in NC to have this designation. Parks and Recreation can apply annually every year for re-dedication. This designation is made possible through Kaboom!, a national non-profit organization who donated and installed playground equipment in the Stonegate community in Greensboro. Staff will meet next week to discuss marketing efforts to inform the community of this designation.

Ponton thanked staff for their efforts in receiving this designation and thanked Commissioner Paul Brown for serving the Greensboro Parks and Recreation Playful City USA Committee.

Cell Phone Tower Update

Dan Maxson, Administrative Services Manager, stated that during the July Commission meeting Liz Hill with American Cell Tower, a company who searches for locations to place cell phone towers, approached the Commission for permission to research the placement of cell phone towers in Greensboro parks. This company believes they can assist Parks and Recreation by placing amenities in Greensboro parks; however wanted permission to have dialogue with staff. Since the last Commission meeting, staff met with the City of Greensboro's cell phone tower coordinator whose job involves the location of cell phone towers on city property and who manages the lease agreements. Staff met with this individual and learned the different assets involved in placing a cell tower on city property. The next step is for Parks and Recreation staff to meet with the city representative and American Cell Tower representatives to discuss possible options of placing cell towers in Parks and Recreation facilities that would not be intrusive to the environment. Any rent that comes from placing a cell tower on city property would go to the city's general fund account. An update will be given at the next Commission meeting.

Ponton asked Roger Bardsley with Guilford County if the county has approved this type of agreement.

Bardsley replied stating no.

Accelerated Bond and 2/3 Bond Project Update

Maxson stated that the Commission has been given a list of accelerated bonds and a list of 2/3 bonds. Maxson commended the Commission for guiding staff and speaking with City Council and the City Manager's Office so that these projects could possibly accelerate. Maxson stated that the Commission asked for the remaining Parks and Recreation 2000 bonds be issued and the 2006 bonds that have not been issued. Additionally, the Commission requested City Council to release the 2008 bond that was approved in November 2008. The lists of projects are categorized by their operating impact. The list reflects those projects that will not have an impact on the maintenance and operations budget as well as those that will have an impact. These projects are expected to be presented to City Council on September 1, 2009.

Maxson mentioned the following bond projects:

Smith Senior Center Renovations
Land Acquisition
Pool Upgrades
Keeley Park

Southwest Recreation Center
Barber Park Phase II

Maxson stated that there are several million dollars on the 2/3 bonds list. The source of funding for these projects is coming from closing a portion of the landfill since it did not cost as much as expected; therefore there is a balance of 3-4 million dollars remaining from this project to be used for other projects. The City Manager's Office highest priorities are neighborhood park renovations and trail bridge replacements. City Council has been given this list to prioritize. Maxson stated that Smith Senior Center is included in the 2/3 bonds list as well as the accelerated bond list; however it has been removed from the 2/3 bonds list because if City Council moves forward with the accelerated bond list it will not need to be included with the 2/3 bonds projects.

Ponton recommended including maintenance costs back into the general operating budget.

War Memorial Stadium Update

John Hughes, Youth and Community Services Manager, stated that the City Manager's Office requested Parks and Recreation staff return to the War Memorial Stakeholders Committee to discuss an alternative proposal from the previous proposal that consisted of removing a portion of the seating, locker rooms, and concessions at a cost of 2.7 million dollars. The stakeholders met and discussed an alternative proposal at a cost estimated at 5.5 million dollars or possibly more. The new proposal consist of a 1,500 seating capacity, to include a city market, host a portion of the A&T homecoming event, and host Music for Sunday Evening in the Park. This would allow for more community based activities other than baseball. This proposal also includes renovating the entrance area to the stadium. Another master plan for the stadium will be created. The next stakeholder meeting will be held later this month to meet with an architect with direction on what to present to City Council.

Marc Bush, Commission Member, volunteered to serve on the stakeholder committee and recommended to the Commission Chair that an additional Commission Member serve on the committee. Bush inquired how this would relate to the 1.4 million dollars designated to the stadium from the 2/3 bond.

Hughes replied stating that he is not aware of where the additional remaining funds from the 2/3 bonds would come from for the stadium.

Bill Knight, Commission Member, inquired if there has been any thought given to approaching organizations such as the Marine Corp League, VFW, etc. to offer some type of support in relation to the facade. Knight stated that he would attend the next stakeholder committee meeting.

Hughes replied stating that in the past that Greg Woodard served on the stakeholder committee and no conversations took place regarding those type approaches. The next stakeholder meeting will be held August 24, 2009 at 5:00pm.

SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR

- NONE -

INTERIM DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

On behalf of Dr. Wade, John Hughes, and Chris Wilson, Maxson commended staff on their efforts this summer with Parks and Recreation programs and events. Maxson stated that fall events are beginning to take place such as football

registration. Maxson thanked the Commission for their commitment to Parks and Recreation and attending events and programs.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

Paul Brown recognized his brother and Windsor Center Community resident in attendance, Willis Brown. Brown stated that he is a Wyndham Golf Tournament volunteer and has 6 tournament tickets available for any Member interested in attending.

Ken Free thanked the Commission and staff for their support with the successful Inner City Classic Baseball Tournament. Free inquired about the Employee of the Month Program.

Ponton stated that the Employee of the Month Program has been temporarily suspended to perhaps be consolidated with a city-wide employee recognition program.

Maxson added that Parks and Recreation staff is working with the city's employee recognition committee to perhaps join forces and have this committee involved with the selection process.

Carl Brower, Jr. stated that he attended part of the Inner City Classic Tournament at Barber Park and that the facility and staff represented Greensboro well.

Steve Moore thanked the Commission for supporting him during his Mother's illness. Moore congratulated the re-elected Chair and Vice-Chair.

Marc Bush commended staff on their efforts with the Inner City Classic and stated that the Open Ceremony for the Inner City Classic was held a week ago at NewBridge Bank Park and the Sports Commission prides itself on these type youth events where parents attend that helps boost the local economy. The week before Greensboro hosted the Jr. Olympics at A&T with 6,700 youth athletes from around the country. Five years ago Greensboro wouldn't have been considered for track and field. The attraction of these activities and the new aquatic center will add to the economic development in Greensboro. Bush thanked Thore for the marketing effort towards soccer at Bryan Park over the summer and Tim Thilo for efforts with these events as well.

Bush announced that he will resign in September as President of the Greensboro Sports Commission after serving 7 years. He will focus his energy on strategic initiatives in sports that involve the Tournament Host Committee that has an agreement with the Greensboro Coliseum and Greensboro Sports Commission.

Rose Marie Ponton stated on behalf of the Commission they have been apprised of Bush's accomplishments he has made for Greensboro and looks forward to working with him in his new efforts. Ponton reminded the Commission of the 30th Annual Citizen Board Member Forum that will be held August 13-15, 2009 at the Airport Marriot.

With no further business Ponton adjourned the meeting at 5:46pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marcie Richardson, Executive Assistant
Greensboro Parks and Recreation